

July 31, 2012

Honorable Ed Whitfield, Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy and Power
Committee on Energy and Commerce
2368 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Whitfield,

We write to you with a simple but vitally important request on behalf of public health and environmental organizations committed to ensuring clean, healthy air for all Americans. As you proceed with the Clean Air Act forums announced for the Subcommittee on Energy and Power, we urge you to make this crucial pledge to the American people: that any policy or legislation emerging from the forums will clean the air more and faster than current law. We ask you and subcommittee members to commit to making air quality and public health better, not worse than the status quo.

The Clean Air Act has enjoyed tremendous success in delivering cleaner, healthier air to all Americans, founded on strong bi-partisan support in Congress that saw the last major statutory update garnering the votes of 401 House members and 89 Senators. But too many of the law's promises remain unfulfilled, with some health safeguards years or even decades overdue and millions of Americans still breathing unhealthy air.

With so much work remaining to clean up the nation's air, we think it is more important than ever that the dialogues fostered by the Clean Air Act forums should share these common objectives: public health and air quality improvements should be strengthened and speeded. No backtracking or delays should be countenanced. Making this public pledge at the outset of these forums will establish a common enterprise and constructive dialogue.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Center for Biological Diversity
Conservation Law Foundation
Earthjustice
League of Conservation Voters
Natural Resources Defense Council
Sierra Club
US Climate Action Network

Cc: Members of the Subcommittee on Energy and Power